DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY GARRISON, PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY
1759 LEWIS ROAD, SUITE 210
MONTEREY, CA 93944-3223

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

IMSW-POM-ZA

0 8 AUG 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Steps You Can Take to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water at the Presidio of Monterey

1. The Presidio of Monterey (POM) obtains its water supply from the California American Water Company (Cal-Am). The water is routinely tested by Cal-Am and meets state and federal drinking water quality standards.

2. In accordance with regulatory requirements, the Army has tested the drinking water at many POM buildings for lead content. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of corroding lead containing materials in the distribution system and household plumbing. The testing program showed that most buildings at the POM have no or trace amounts of lead in drinking water. The regulatory action level for lead in drinking water is 15 parts per billion (15 ppb). This level was exceeded at some POM buildings, but not consistently over the years.

3. The water is safe to drink. However, lead could be present in small amounts if the water stands in pipes for many hours before use. Lead is known to have undesirable health effects if excessive amount is consumed. I encourage you to take the following steps to reduce the potential exposure to lead in drinking water:

a. Let water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking when the faucet has gone unused for more than six hours. Use the first-flush water to wash dishes or water plants.

b. Try not to cook with, or drink from the hot water tap.

4. Please read the enclosed fact sheet for additional information. If you have any questions concerning water quality or the enclosed fact sheet, please contact Ms. Chieko Nguyen of the Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Division at (831) 899-7372.

Encl
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PAMELA L. MARTIS
COL, MP
Commanding
USAG, Presidio of Monterey

DISTRIBUTION:
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July 2006

FACTS ON: LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

Presidio of Monterey Directorate of Public Works
Environmental Division (831) 899-7372

Is there lead in my drinking water?

Many of the buildings at the Presidio of Monterey (POM) are of older construction and plumbing system components containing lead may exist. Because lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of plumbing materials, trace amounts of lead may be present in drinking water.

This fact sheet provides you the information about trace amount of lead that might be in drinking water at the POM, health risks from lead, and the simple steps you can take to protect you and your family by reducing exposure to lead in drinking water.

In 2004, POM DPW completed an evaluation of lead levels in drinking water at the POM based on several years of testing. This evaluation concluded that most buildings had very low levels of lead in drinking water. Some buildings had levels above the action level of 15 micrograms of lead per liter of water (µg/L), but levels are not consistent at any location and no specific sources of lead could be pinpointed. The water distribution system at the POM has no known lead service lines.

California-American Water Company provides drinking water to the POM. The water delivered to the POM is tested to periodically and meets federal and state drinking water quality standards.

For Additional Information Contact:

- DPW Environmental Division **899-7372** for information about this fact sheet
- DPW Operation & Maintenance Division **242-6315** for general information about building design and plumbing materials
- California Medical Detachment **242-7585** for information about drinking water and health
- California-American Water Company **(888) 237 -1333** for annual water quality report

What are risks from lead in drinking water?

Lead is a common metal found in the environment in lead-based paint, air, soil, household dust, food, certain types of pottery, porcelain and pewter, and water. Lead can pose a significant risk to your health if too much of it enters your body. Lead builds up in the body over many years and can cause damage to the brain, red blood cells and kidneys.

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly exposure to infants who drink baby formulas and concentrated juices mixed with lead-containing water. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that drinking water can make up 20% or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

The greatest risk is to young children and pregnant women. The amount of lead that is usually harmless to an adult can effect normal mental and physical development in children. In addition, a child-at-play often comes into contact with other sources of lead that *an adult* would not. It is important to wash children's hands and toys often and ensure they place only food in their mouths.

How does lead get into drinking water?

Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and household plumbing. Lead-containing plumbing materials were commonly used before Congress banned in 1986 the use of pipe joint solder containing greater than 0.2% lead and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials to 8.0%. In California, a similar law prohibiting the use of both lead solder and lead pipe was enacted in 1985.

When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon after returning from work or school, can contain fairly high levels of lead.

What can I do to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water?

Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in a faucet has gone unused for more than six hours. The longer water resides in your home's plumbing the potential for lead contamination increases. Flushing the tap means running the cold water faucet until the water gets noticeably colder, usually about 15 to 30 seconds. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of your home's plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using for drinking or cooking.

Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your family's health. It usually takes less than one or two gallons of water. To conserve water after flushing the tap, fill a couple of bottles for drinking purposes and whenever possible use the first-flush water to wash dishes or water plants.

Avoid cooking or drinking water from the hot water tap. Lead dissolves more rapidly in hot water than cold. If you need hot water, draw water from the cold tap and heat it on the stove.

Home water treatment devices or bottled water are an option as a precautionary measure. Purchase of bottled water or home treatment devices will be at the individual's expense.

Please note that home treatment devices are limited in that each unit treats only the water that flows from the faucet to which it is connected and require periodic maintenance and replacement. Devices such as reverse osmosis systems or distillers can effectively remove lead from your drinking water. Since these treatments remove dissolved minerals, water treated by these devices will have a greater tendency to leach lead from brass faucets or fittings that the water contacts after treatment. Some activated carbon filters may reduce lead levels at the tap. However, lead reduction claims from a water treatment device manufacturer should be investigated. Be sure to check the actual performance of a specific home treatment device before and after installing the unit.

Please call POM DPW Environmental Division at (831) 899-7372 if you have any questions.